REQUEST FOR APPLICATION

Food Safety Outreach Competitive Grants Program

FUNDING YEAR:	Fiscal Year 2020
APPLICATION DEADLINE:	April 7, 2020
LETTER OF INTENT DEADLINE:	Not Required
AWARD AMOUNT:	$8,000,000
CATALOG OF FEDERAL DOMESTIC ASSISTANCE NUMBER:	10.328

INITIAL ANNOUNCEMENT
National Institute of Food and Agriculture, United States (U.S.) Department of Agriculture (USDA)

Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance. The *Food Safety Outreach Program (FSOP)* is listed in the Assistance Listings under the Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance number 10.328.

Table 1: Key Dates and Deadlines

Task Description	Deadline
Application:	5:00 P.M. Eastern, April 7, 2020 [*Ref to Part I § C of this RFA*]
Letter of Intent:	Not Required
Applicants Comments:	Within six months from the issuance of this notice (*NIFA may not consider comments received after the sixth month*)

Stakeholder Input. The National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA) seeks comments on all request for applications (RFAs) so it can deliver programs efficiently, effectively, with integrity, and with a focus on customer service. NIFA considers comments, to the extent possible when developing RFAs and use comments to help meet the requirements of Section 103(c)(2) of the Agricultural Research, Extension, and Education Reform Act of 1998 (7 U.S.C. 7613(c)(2)). Applicants may submit written comments to Policy@usda.gov (email is for comments only). Please use the following subject line: Response to the Food Safety Outreach Program RFA.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This notice identifies the objectives for FSOP projects, deadlines, funding information, eligibility criteria for projects and applicants, and application forms and associated instructions. NIFA requests applications for the FSOP for fiscal year (FY) 2020 to develop and implement food safety training, education, extension, outreach and technical assistance projects that address the needs of owners and operators of small to mid-sized farms, beginning farmers, socially-disadvantaged farmers, small processors, or small fresh fruit and vegetable merchant wholesalers. These audiences are affected by the food safety guidelines established under the Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA) (7 U.S.C. 7625) (www.fda.gov/fsma). In FY 2020, FSOP will maintain focus on delivery of customized training to members of the target audiences by continuing to solicit Community Outreach Projects and Collaborative Education and Training Projects. New projects will focus on, but are not limited to, providing on farm or on-site training and/or technical assistance that addresses knowledge and resource gaps for the target audiences in the areas of pre- and post-harvest water testing and sampling, soil amendments, developing supply chain programs, and/or developing food safety plans. The program will also continue to fund projects that develop bilingual and culturally appropriate training. Grant applications will be solicited directly from those in local communities, to include community-based organizations, non-governmental organizations, food hubs, farm cooperatives, extension, and other local groups. Supplemental Collaborative Engagement funding opportunities are available to energize collaboration and coordination among 1890s, 1862s, 1994s, Insular Areas, Alaska Native Native Hawaiian (ANNH), and Hispanic Serving Agricultural Colleges and Universities (HSACU).

Supplemental funding will be available through the Community Outreach and Collaborative Education, and Training Project types. Successful Community Outreach and Collaborative Education and Training Project awardees will be required to interact with Regional Centers by reporting project outcomes to the Centers. This will ensure that activities and efforts undertaken by all FY 2017-2020 awardees are well-integrated with the national Food Safety Outreach infrastructure. The amount available for grants in FY 2020 is approximately $8 million.

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PART I. FUNDING OPPORTUNITY DESCRIPTION

A. Legislative Authority

On January 4, 2011, the Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA) (www.fda.gov/fsma) was signed into legislation. Section 209 of the Act amended the Food and Drug Cosmetic Act, 21 U.S.C. 391 et seq. by adding section 1011, Subsection (d) entitled "National Food Safety Training, Education, Extension, Outreach and Technical Assistance Program". Under the program, competitive grants are to be awarded to projects that develop and implement FSMA-related food safety training, education, extension, outreach, and technical assistance to owners and operators of small and medium-sized farms, beginning farmers, socially disadvantaged farmers, small processors or small fresh fruit and vegetable merchant wholesalers. In FY 2015, NIFA and Food and Drug Administration (FDA) collaborated to establish the National Food Safety Training, Education, Extension, Outreach and Technical Assistance Competitive Grant Program national infrastructure. FSOP continues to expand the program by soliciting new proposals for Community Outreach Projects and Collaborative Education and Training Projects. Paragraph (d)(2) of FSMA requires that competitive grant programs be carried out in accordance with Section 405 of the Agricultural Research, Extension, and Education Reform Act of 1998 (AREERA) (7 U.S.C.7625) as amended.

B. Purpose and Priorities

FSOP will maintain and continue to grow the training, education, outreach and coordination across FSOP by soliciting new Community Outreach Projects and Collaborative Education and Training Projects. This request for Applications (RFA) will solicit proposals for two project types:

1) ***Community Outreach Projects*** (awards: $80,000 - $150,000) - An additional $150,000 is available for Collaborative Engagement Supplements, for a total budget of $300,000.

2) ***Collaborative Education and Training Projects*** (awards: $200,000 - $400,000) - An additional $150,000 is available for Collaborative Engagement Supplements, for a total budget of $550,000.

Community Outreach Projects will support the development of new food safety education and outreach programs in local communities and expand upon existing food safety education and outreach programs that address the needs of small, specialized audiences whose education needs have not previously been adequately addressed. Projects will focus on building the capacity of local groups to identify very specific needs within their communities, and to implement appropriately customized food safety education and outreach programs to meet those specific needs. Where needed, Regional Centers will provide support and assistance by aiding in the development of mechanisms for reporting program outcomes and providing food safety technical assistance when warranted. Community Outreach Projects will also support the growth and expansion of already existing food safety education and outreach programs currently offered in local communities; to include previously funded, successful Pilot Projects. In addition, these projects will enable existing programs to reach a broader target audience, provide technical assistance and/or to expand to new audiences. These projects will enable existing education and training curricula to be modified to ensure they are consistent with new FSMA rules and to ensure that they meet the needs of expanded audiences. New audiences may include those from a variety of agricultural production and processing systems.

Collaborative Education and Training Projects will support the development of multi-county, state-wide or multi-state programs. For example, these projects will support collaborations among states not necessarily located within the same regions, but having common food safety concerns, or addressing common commodities. Potential applicants must have an established track record of working with target audiences, and must be capable of developing and modifying food safety training curricula to meet new FSMA rules for a variety of agricultural production and processing systems.

- **Collaborative Engagement Supplement** will be available for applications submitted under Community Outreach Projects and Collaborative Education and Training Projects that support coordination among 1890s, 1862s, 1994s, Insular Areas, ANNH, and HSACU.

- Applications that include **significant** collaborations with 1890s, 1862s, 1994s, Insular Areas, ANNH, or HSACU to increase outreach to underserved minority communities will be funded up to $150,000 above the listed budget maximum for Community Outreach and Collaborative Education and Training Projects (up to $300,000 for Community Outreach and $550,000 for Collaborative Education and Training).

eXtension. FSOP encourages (but does not require) projects that develop content suitable for delivery through eXtension.

Global Engagement. NIFA supports global engagement that advances U.S. agricultural goals. NIFA recognizes that collaboration with international partners may be necessary to attain the agency's goals for U.S. agriculture, promote global competence of our nation's future agricultural workforce, and promote safe and nutritious food security in a growing world. Therefore, although application to this RFA is limited to eligible U.S. institutions, applicants may collaborate with international partners, to include subcontracts to international partners or other institutions. Applications must clearly demonstrate benefits to the U.S.

The FSOP is aligned with the following USDA Strategic Goals:

1. Strategic Goal 1: Ensure USDA Programs Are Delivered Efficiently, Effectively, With Integrity and a Focus on Customer Service;
2. Strategic Goal 2: Maximize the Ability of American Agricultural Producers To Prosper by Feeding and Clothing the World;
3. Strategic Goal 4: Facilitate Rural Prosperity and Economic Development;
4. Strategic Goal 7: Provide all Americans Access to a Safe, Nutritious, and Secure Food Supply.

C. Program Area Description

NIFA is soliciting applications under the following program areas:

1. Community Outreach Projects
2. Collaborative Education and Training Projects

Table 2: Community Outreach Projects Key Information

Title	Description
Program Code:	A4182
Program Code Name:	FSOP
CFDA Number	10.328
Project Type:	Community Outreach Project
Grant Type:	Standard
Application Deadline	April 7, 2020
Grant Duration:	24 Months
Anticipated # of Awards:	12
Maximum Award Amount:	$300,000

Community Outreach Projects

Community Outreach Projects will support the development of food safety education and outreach programs in local communities and the expansion of existing food safety education programs that address the needs of small, specialized audiences whose education needs have not previously been adequately addressed. Projects will focus on building the capacity of local groups to identify very specific needs within their communities, and to implement appropriately-customized food safety education and outreach programs to meet those specific needs. Community Outreach Projects will support the growth and expansion of already existing food safety education and outreach programs currently offered in local communities; to include previously funded, successful Pilot Projects. In addition, these projects will enable existing programs to reach a broader target audience, provide technical assistance and/or to expand to new audiences.

Collaborative Engagement Supplements will be available for applications submitted under Community Outreach Projects and Collaborative Education and Training Projects that support coordination among 1890s, 1862s, 1994s, Insular Areas, ANNH and HSACU.

- Applications that include **significant** collaborations with 1890s, 1862s, 1994s, Insular Areas, ANNH, or HSACU, to increase outreach to underserved minority communities will be funded up to $150,000 above the listed budget maximum for Community Outreach and Collaborative Education and Training Projects (up to $300,000 for Community Outreach and $550,000 for Collaborative Education and Training).

Community Outreach Projects should at least include the following:

- Focus on developing, implementing, or expanding food safety education to non-traditional, niche, or hard-to-reach audiences;
- Be led by project teams who demonstrate a record of developing and maintaining community partnerships and working successfully to serve the educational needs of the target audiences identified; and
- Develop and implement customized food safety education and outreach programs for those working with various agricultural production and processing systems, including conservation systems, sustainable systems and organic farming systems.

Table 3: Collaborative Education and Training Projects Key Information

Title	Description
Program Code:	A4182
Program Code Name:	FSOP
CFDA Number	10.328
Project Type:	Collaborative Education and Training
Grant Type:	Standard
Application Deadline	April 7, 2020
Grant Duration:	36 Months
Anticipated # of Awards:	
Maximum Award Amount:	$550,000

Collaborative Education and Training Projects

Collaborative Education and Training Projects should at least include the following:

- Be led by project teams who demonstrate a record of developing and maintaining community partnerships and working successfully to serve the educational needs of the target audiences identified; and
- Develop and implement customized food safety education and outreach programs for those working with various agricultural production and processing systems, including conservation systems, sustainable systems, and organic farming systems.

Collaborative Engagement Supplements will be available for applications submitted under Community Outreach Projects and Collaborative Education and Training Projects that support coordination among 1890s, 1862s, 1994s, Insular Areas, ANNH and HSACU.

- Applications that include **significant** collaborations with 1890s, 1862s, 1994s, Insular Areas, ANNH, or HSACU, to increase outreach to underserved minority communities will be funded up to $150,000 above the listed budget maximum for Community Outreach and Collaborative Education and Training Projects (up to $300,000 for Community Outreach and $550,000 for Collaborative Education and Training).

Both project types have common programmatic terms and conditions to ensure alignment with the FSOP. To fulfill this purpose, the following communication terms and conditions will be followed:

- Each successfully-funded project team must develop a communication plan to describe how they will interact with their respective Regional Centers. The communication plan must describe a strategy for collecting data and reporting the outcomes of all Community Outreach Projects and Collaborative Education and Training Projects to the respective Regional Centers. Where needed, Regional Center staff will assist Project Directors with developing the communication plan and reporting mechanisms. Regional Center staff will be responsible for reporting overall project outcomes to the Lead Regional Center. The Lead Regional Center will collate the individual project outcomes, develop best

practices based on those project outcomes, and report overall outcomes of the program to national program staff at NIFA.

- Project outcomes that are reported to the Regional Centers may include a variety of qualitative (descriptive) and/or quantitative (metrics) measures. Quantitative and qualitative measures may include, but are not limited to: 1) New or novel education, training materials, and resources for specific target audiences; 2) New or novel delivery mechanisms developed and implemented for specific target audiences; 3) Specific commodities or common food safety issues addressed; 4) Specific target audiences, including niche, hard-to-reach, or underserved audiences identified and trained; 5) Best practices identified and applied by specific target audiences; 6) Number of education and training sessions conducted; 7) Number of participants in training and education programs; and 8) Number and percent of participants reporting changes in knowledge and/or behavior as a result of participation in education and training sessions.

- The Project Director will be responsible for managing all technical and programmatic aspects of the grant and will be responsible for appropriately acknowledging USDA-NIFA's funding support in publications, public announcements, news releases, and other media sources.

- The Project Director for the Community Outreach and Collaborative Education and Training Project teams will be responsible for attending Regional Center and Lead Regional Center Meetings. During the meeting, Project Directors will report on the progress of their projects, share updates on modified training materials or curricula, and report on interim programmatic outcomes.

PART II. AWARD INFORMATION

A. Available Funding

The anticipated amount available for FSOP in FY 2020 are approximately $8M. USDA is not committed to fund any particular application or to make a specific number of awards. The Automated Standard Application for Payments, operated by the Department of Treasury, Bureau of Fiscal Service, is the designated payment system for awards resulting from this RFA.

B. Application Restrictions

NIFA will evaluate applications using the criteria described in Part V of this RFA. Application for FY 2020 is limited to the following applications types:

1. *New application*: New applications will be evaluated using the criteria described in Part V of this RFA and are subject to the due dates herein (see Appendix III for definition).
2. *Resubmitted application*: Resubmitted applications must include the respond to the previous review panel summary, and are subject to the same criteria and due dates herein. Resubmitted applicants must enter the NIFA-assigned proposal number of the previously submitted application in the *Federal Field (Field 4)* on the application form (see Appendix III for definition).

C. Project and Grant Types

The following describes the types of *projects* or *grants* that are eligible for funding:

Project Types - Community Outreach Projects and Collaborative Education and Training Projects

D. Ethical Conduct of Funded Projects

In accordance with sections 2, 3, and 8 of 2 CFR Part 422, institutions that conduct USDA-funded extramural research must foster an atmosphere conducive to research integrity, bear primary responsibility for prevention and detection of research misconduct, and maintain and effectively communicate and train their staff regarding policies and procedures. In the event an application to NIFA results in an award, the Authorized Representative (AR) assures, through acceptance of the award that the institution will comply with the above requirements. Award recipients must, upon request, make available to NIFA the policies, procedures, and documentation to support the conduct of the training. See Responsible and Ethical Conduct of Research for further information.

PART III. ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

A. Eligibility Requirements

Entities are eligible to apply to this RFA if they meet at least one of the following criteria:

1. The Cooperative Extension Service for a U.S. state or territory;
2. Non-government organizations and/or community based organizations representing owners and operators of farms, small food processors, or small fruit and vegetable merchant wholesalers that has a commitment to public health and expertise in administering programs that contribute to food safety;
3. Federal, State, local, or tribal agencies;
4. An institution of higher education (as defined in Section 101(a) of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1001(a)) or a foundation maintained by an institution of higher education;
5. A collaboration of two or more eligible entities.

Applicants for the FSOP must meet all the requirements discussed in this RFA. Failure to meet the eligibility criteria by the application deadline may result in exclusion from consideration or, preclude NIFA from making an award. For those new to Federal financial assistance, NIFA's Grants Overview provides highly recommended information about grants and other resources to help understand the Federal awards process.

Duplicate or Multiple Submissions – duplicate or multiple submissions is not allowed. NIFA will disqualify both applications if an applicant submits duplicate or multiple submissions. For those new to Federal financial assistance, NIFA's Grants Overview provides highly recommended information about grants and other resources to help understand the Federal awards process.

B. Cost Sharing or Matching

No Match Required - The FSOP has ***NO*** matching requirement. NIFA will not factor matching resources into the review process as an evaluation criterion.

PART IV. APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION

A. Method of Application

Applicants must apply to this RFA electronically; no other method or response is accepted. The electronic application for this RFA and additional resources are available on Grants.gov and Grants 101. **Table 4** provides instructions on how to obtain an electronic application. **Part II § 1** of the NIFA Grants.gov Application Guide (Application Guide) contains detailed information regarding the Grants.gov registration process.

Table 4. Steps to Obtain Application Materials

Steps	Action
Step One: Register	*New Users* to Grants.gov must register early with Grants.gov prior to submitting an application (Register Here).

Steps	Action
Step Two: Download Adobe	Download and Install Adobe Reader (see Adobe Software Compatibility for basic system requirements)
Step Three: Find Application	Using this funding opportunity number USDA-NIFA-FSMA-007213, search for application here: Opportunity Package.
Step Four: Assess Readiness	Contact an AR prior to starting an application to assess the organization's readiness to submit an electronic application.

Table 2: Help and Resources

Grants.gov Support	NIFA Support
Grants.gov Online Support Telephone support: 800-518-4726 Toll-Free or 606-545-5035 Email support: support@grants.gov Self-service customer based support: Grants.gov iPortal *Key Information: Customer service business Hours 24/7, except federal holidays.*	Email: electronic@nifa.usda.gov Phone: 202-401-5048 *Key Information*: Business hours: Monday thru Friday, 7a.m. – 5p.m. ET, except federal holidays

B. Content and Form of the Application

The Application Guide is part of the corresponding application package for this RFA. The RFA overrides the Application Guide if there is a discrepancy between the two documents. NIFA will accept subsequent submissions to an application until the application deadline. However, applicants that do not meet the application requirements, to include partial applications, risk being excluded from NIFA's review. NIFA will assign a proposal number to all applications that meet the requirements of this RFA. Applicants must refer to the proposal number when corresponding with NIFA. **Table 5** outlines other key instructions for applicants.

Table 3: Key Application Instructions

Instruction	References (All references are to the Application Guide)
Attachments must be in a portable document format (PDF) format.	**Part III § 3**
Check the manifest of submitted files to verify attachments are in the correct format.	**Part III § 6.1**

Instruction	References (All references are to the Application Guide)
Conduct an administrative review of the application before submission.	**Part VII and**
Follow the submission instructions.	**Part IV § 1.5**
Provide an accurate email address, where designated, on the SF-424 R&R.	**Part IV § 1.5**
Contact the Grants.gov helpdesk for technical support, and keep a record of the correspondence.	
Contact NIFA if applicant does not received correspondence from NIFA regarding an application within ***30*** days of the application deadline.	

SF 424 R&R Cover Sheet. See **Part V § 2** and **Part V § 2.17**of the Application Guide for the required certifications and assurances.

SF 424 R&R Project/Performance Site Location(s). See **Part V § 3** of the Application Guide.

R&R Other Project Information Form. See **Part V § 4** of the Application Guide.

1. Field 7. Project Summary (PS)/Abstract. The PS must show how the project goals align with the project goals of the FSOP. See **Part V § 4.7** of the Application Guide for instructions and suggested templates.
2. Field 8. Project Narrative (PN). The PN for the Collaborative Education and Training Projects must not exceed 20 *1.5 spaced* pages of written text including tables and figures (the font size for tables should be no smaller than 11 points, Times New Roman). The Project Narrative for the **Community Outreach Projects must not exceed a total of 10 pages** *1.5 spaced* pages of written text including tables and figures (the font size for tables should be no smaller than 11 points, Times New Roman). The page limits outlined here ensure fair and equitable competition. Appendices to the PN are allowed if they are directly germane to the proposed project. Do not add appendices to circumvent the page limit. The PN must include all of the following:
   a. Introduction;
   b. Rationale and significance;
   c. Objectives;
   d. Approach;
   e. Summary of previous work;
   f. Response to previous review: The response to previous review must not exceed one *1.5 spaced* page. This does not count towards the page limit for the PN.
3. Field 12, Add Other Attachments. See **Part V § 4.12** of the Application Guide.

R&R Senior/Key Person Profile (Expanded). See **Part V § 5** of the Application Guide for profile requirements, details about the biographical sketch, and suggested support templates.

R&R Personal Data. This information is voluntary and is not a precondition of award (see **Part V § 6** of the Application Guide).

R&R Budget. See **Part V § 7** of the Application Guide.

1. Match – If an applicant concludes that the matching requirements described under Part III § B of this RFA is not applicable to them; the applicant must include an explanation of their conclusion in the *budget justification*. NIFA will consider this justification when determining final matching requirements or if required matching can be waived. NIFA retains the right to make final determinations regarding matching requirements. Grants that require matching funds as specified under Part III § B of this RFA must list in their *budget justification* the matching sources, the identification of the entity(ies) providing the match, and the total pledged amount. A written verification of commitments of matching support (a pledge agreement) is not required. However, applicants are subject to the documentation, valuing and reporting requirements, as specified in 2 CFR Part 200, "Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards (the Uniform Guidance)," and 7 CFR 3430, "Competitive and Noncompetitive Non-Formula Federal Assistance Programs – General Award Administrative Provisions."
2. Indirect costs (IDC) – See Part IV § C of this RFA for funding restrictions regarding indirect cost, and **Part V 7.9** of the Application Guide for additional information.

Data Management Plan. A DMP is required for this program. Applicants should clearly articulate how the project director (PD) and co-PDs plan to manage and disseminate the data generated by the project. The DMP will be considered during the merit review process (see Part V § B of this RFA, **Part III § 3.1** of the Application Guide and NIFA's Data Management Plan).

Supplemental Information Form. See **Part VI § 1** of the Application Guide.

1. Field 2. Program to which the applicant is applying. Enter the program name (*FSOP*) and the program code (*A4182*). Accurate entry is critical.
2. Field 8. Conflict of Interest List. See **Part VI § 1.8** of the Application Guide.

Representations Regarding Felony Conviction and Tax Delinquent Status for Corporate Applicants. This is required for corporate applicants. See **Part VI § 2** of the Application Guide for a description of the term, "corporation."

C. Funding Restrictions

Indirect Cost (IDC) not to exceed 30 percent of Total Federal Funds Awarded (TFFA) of the recipient. Section 1462(a) and (c) of the National Agricultural Research, Extension, and Teaching Policy Act of 1977 (NARETPA) limits IDC for the overall award to 30 percent of Total Federal Funds Awarded (TFFA) under a research, education, or extension grant. The maximum IDC rate allowed under the award is determined by calculating the amount of IDC using:

1. The sum of an institution's negotiated indirect cost rate and the indirect cost rate charged by sub-awardees, if any; or
2. 30 percent of TFFA.

The maximum allowable IDC rate under the award, including the IDC charged by the sub-awardee(s), if any, is the lesser of the two rates.

If the result of number one is the lesser of the two rates, the grant recipient is allowed to charge the negotiated IDC rate on the prime award and the sub-award(s), if any. Any sub-awards would be subject to the sub-awardee's negotiated IDC rate. The sub-awardee may charge its negotiated IDC rate on its portion of the award, provided the sum of the IDC rate charged under the award by the prime awardee and the sub-awardee(s) does not exceed 30 percent of the TFFA.

If the result of number two is the lesser of the two rates, then the maximum IDC rate allowed for the overall award, including any sub-award(s), is limited to 30 percent of the TFFA. That is, the IDC of the prime awardee plus the sum of the IDC charged by the sub-awardee(s), if any, may not exceed 30 percent of the TFFA.

In the event of an award, the prime awardee is responsible for ensuring the maximum indirect cost allowed for the award is not exceeded when combining IDC for the Federal portion (i.e., prime and sub-awardee(s)) and any applicable cost-sharing (see 7 CFR 3430.52(b)). Amounts exceeding the maximum allowable IDC are considered unallowable. See sections 408 and 410 of 2 CFR 200.

Successful applicants must not use grant funds awarded under the authority of this RFA to renovate or refurbish research, education, or extension space; purchase or install fixed equipment in such space; or to plan, repair, rehabilitate, acquire, or construct buildings or facilities.

PART V. APPLICATION REVIEW REQUIREMENTS

A. NIFA's Evaluation Process

NIFA has two evaluation levels, 1) an individual panelist review, and 2) a peer panel review. NIFA selects reviewers based upon their training and experience in relevant scientific, extension, or education fields; the extent to which an individual is engaged in relevant research, education, or extension activities; the need to include experts from various areas of specialization within relevant scientific, education, or extension fields; the need to include experts from a variety of organizational types; and the need to maintain a balanced composition with regard to minority and female representation and an equitable age distribution (see NIFA Peer Review Process).

The panelist independently assesses the strengths and weaknesses of the application, evaluate the likelihood that the proposed project will have significant outcomes and impacts, and most importantly, evaluate how well the application addresses the requirements of this RFA. The panelist subsequently summarizes the conclusions of their review and assigns a review score as applicable.

The peer panel review commences after the individual panelist review. The review is a discussion of each of the panelists summarized conclusion and score (if applicable). The conclusion of the peer panel review is a consensus final rating and ranking for each proposal.

After the evaluation process, NIFA reserves the right to negotiate with the PD and/or with the submitting organization or institution regarding project revisions (e.g., reductions in the scope of work, funding level, period, or method of support) prior to recommending any project for funding. NIFA sends applicants copies of reviews and a summary of the panel comments to the PD after the review process (this does not include the identity of reviewers).

Conflicts of interest. NIFA takes extreme care to prevent any actual or perceived conflicts of interest that may influence the review or evaluation (see NIFA Peer Review Process for Competitive Grant Applications).

B. Evaluation Criteria

The following evaluation criteria will be used to evaluate applications for **Community Outreach Projects** submitted in response to this RFA:

1. Objectives

This criterion is used to assess how well the Community Outreach Projects:

a. Identify and justify specific food safety education and training needs and other resources for various target audiences within local communities;
b. Support the establishment, development, growth and/or expansion of new or already-existing food safety education and training programs within communities, and ensure that they are consistent with new FSMA guidelines;
c. Leverage partnerships with non-governmental organizations, community-based organizations, extension, food hubs, farm cooperatives and/or others who typically work with owners and operators of small and/or medium-sized farms, beginning farmers, socially disadvantaged farmers, small processors, and small fresh fruit and vegetable merchant wholesalers; and

d. Previously funded Pilot Projects should identify significant outcomes and impacts of the successful project and include a strong justification and detailed plans for expansion to a larger audience.

2. Methods
This criterion is used to assess the procedures for:

a. Modifying curricula to address a traditionally underserved niche audience;
b. Further developing and expanding already-existing community-based food safety education and training programs and other resources. Programs may be expanded to reach a greater number of participants, or to reach new audiences not currently targeted by the existing programs;
c. Developing a communications plan for interacting with respective Regional Centers and for reporting project outcomes to the Regional Centers; and
d. Developing a plan for evaluating the outcomes of the project, collecting outcome data, and reporting project outcomes to the respective Regional Centers.

3. Key Personnel and Project Management
This criterion is used to assess management of the proposed project, including the roles and responsibilities of key project staff, which include:

a. Clearly defining the roles and responsibilities of key staff in the overall management of the project;
b. Developing a timeline that includes benchmarks for key events that address the project objectives;
c. Identifying key personnel responsible for collecting project outcome data, reporting project outcomes and interacting with staff at the respective Regional Centers;
d. Developing strong partnerships with those in local communities that enable them to address the needs of non-traditional, niche, and hard-to-reach audiences; and
e. Coordinating food safety education and training efforts with local communities involved in the project.

4. Budget and Budget Justification
This criterion is used to assess how well the proposed budget:

a. Adequately supports project activities that are consistent with the proposed objectives;
b. Incorporates innovative approaches for making use of currently available resources within local communities, while supporting development and implementation of new resources that are critical for meeting the food safety education and training needs of target audiences; and
c. Allocate and justify resources to key personnel responsible for managing and conducting the project activities.

The following evaluation criteria will be used to evaluate applications for **Collaborative Education and Training Projects** submitted in response to this RFA:

1. Objectives
This criterion is used to assess how well the **Collaborative Education and Training Projects:**

a. Support the development of multi-county, state-wide, or multi-state food safety education and outreach programs and other resources that are consistent with the FSMA guidelines;
b. Encourage collaborations among counties and states sharing common food safety concerns, commodities, or production and processing practices; and
c. Leverage partnerships with non-governmental organizations, community-based organizations, extension, food hubs, farm cooperatives and/or others who typically work with owners and operators of small and/or medium-sized farms, beginning farmers, socially disadvantaged farmers, small processors, and small fresh fruit and vegetable merchant wholesalers.

2. Methods

This criterion is used to assess the procedures for:

a. Building and maintaining partnerships among collaborating counties and states that are not necessarily located in the same regions. For example, Collaborative Education and Training Projects would support collaborations among California, and Florida;
b. Developing a communications plan for interacting with respective Regional Centers and for reporting project outcomes to the Regional Centers; and
c. Developing a plan for evaluating the outcomes of the project, collecting outcome data, and reporting project outcomes to the respective Regional Centers. Both quantitative and qualitative measures may be used in the evaluation. Measures may include, but are not limited to, new or novel education and training materials developed or modified for use by specific target audiences, new or novel delivery mechanisms developed and implemented for specific target audiences, specific commodities or common food safety issues addressed, specific target audiences, including niche, hard-to-reach, or underserved audiences identified and trained, best practices identified for specific target audiences, number of education and training sessions conducted, participants reporting changes in knowledge and /or behavior as a result of participation in education and training sessions.

3. Key Personnel and Project Management

This criterion is used to assess management of the proposed project, including the roles and responsibilities of key project staff, which include:

a. Clearly defining the roles and responsibilities of key staff in the overall management of the project;
b. Developing a timeline that includes benchmarks for key events that address the project objectives;
c. Identifying key personnel responsible for collecting project outcome data, reporting project outcomes and interacting with staff at the respective Regional Centers;
d. Developing strong partnerships with those in local communities that enable them to address the needs of non-traditional, niche, and hard-to-reach audiences; and
e. Coordinating food safety education and training efforts with local communities involved in the project.

4. Budget and Budget Justification

This criterion is used to assess how well the proposed budget:

a. Adequately supports project activities that are consistent with the proposed objectives;
b. Incorporates innovative approaches for making use of currently available resources within local communities, while supporting development and implementation of new resources that are critical for meeting the food safety education and training needs of target audiences; and
c. Allocate and justify resources to key personnel responsible for managing and conducting the project activities.

The following evaluation criteria will be used to review applications for **Collaborative Engagement Supplements** submitted under Community Outreach Project and Collaborative Education and Training Project types in response to this RFA.

1. Collaborations with 1890s, 1994s, 1862s, Insular Areas, ANNH, and HSACU.
    a. Collaborations must be seamless and interdependent for overall programmatic success.
    b. Budget should adequately reflect the proposed effort and activities from collaborating institutions.

C. Organizational Management Information

Applicants must submit specific management information relating to an applicant prior to an award, and update the information as needed. Applicants may only have to update their information if they had previously provided the information under this or another NIFA program. NIFA provides the requisite forms during the pre-award process. Although an applicant may be eligible for award under this program, there are factors that may exclude an applicant from receiving federal financial and nonfinancial assistance and benefits under this program (e.g., debarment or suspension of an individual, or a determination that an applicant is not responsible).

D. Application Disposition

Applicants may withdraw at any time before NIFA makes a final funding decision. NIFA will retain all applications, including withdrawn applications and unfunded applications.

PART VI. AWARD ADMINISTRATION

A. General

Within the limit of funds authorized, the NIFA awarding official will make grants to responsible and eligible applicants whose applications are judged most meritorious under the procedures set forth in this RFA. The date specified by the NIFA awarding official as the effective date of the grant must be no later than September 30 of the federal fiscal year in which the project is approved for support and funds are appropriated for such purpose, unless otherwise permitted by law. The project need not be initiated on the grant effective date, but as soon thereafter as practical so that project goals may be attained within the funded project period. All funds granted by NIFA under this RFA may be used only for the purpose for which they are granted in accordance with the approved application and budget, regulations, terms and conditions of the award, applicable federal cost principles, USDA assistance regulations, and NIFA General Awards Administration Provisions,7 CFR part 3430, subparts A through E.

Award Notice. The award document will provide pertinent instructions and information as described in 2 CFR 200.210 (see NIFA's Terms and Conditions).

B. Administrative and National Policy Requirements

Several federal statutes and regulations apply to grant applications and the projects outlined in this RFA (some are listed here: Federal Regulations). Unless specifically noted by statue or award-specific requirements, NIFA Policy Guide applies to all NIFA awards.

PART VII. OTHER INFORMATION

A. Use of Funds and Changes in Budget

Delegation of fiscal responsibility. Unless the terms and conditions of the award state otherwise, awardees may not in whole or in part delegate or transfer to another person, institution, or organization the responsibility for use or expenditure of award funds.

Changes in Budget or Project Plans. In accordance with 2 CFR 200.308, awardees must request prior approval from NIFA for the following program or budget-related reasons (the awardee is subject to the terms and conditions identified in the award):

1. Change in the scope or the objective of the project or program without prior written approval (even if there is no associated budget revision requiring);
2. Change in a key person specified in the application or the federal award;
3. Disengagement from the project for more than three months, or a 25 percent reduction in time devoted to the project;
4. Inclusion of costs that require prior approval in accordance with 2 CFR 200 Subpart E (Cost Principles), or 45 CFR Part 75 Appendix IX, (Principles for Determining Costs Applicable to Research and Development under Awards and Contracts with Hospitals), or 48 CFR, unless waived by the federal awarding agency,
5. Part 31, Contract Cost Principles and Procedures;
6. Transfer of funds budgeted for participant support costs to other categories of expense (§200.75 Participant support costs);
7. Sub-awarding, transferring or contracting out of any work under a federal award, including fixed amount sub-awards (see §200.332, Fixed Amount Sub-awards), unless described in the application and funded in the approved federal awards. This provision does not apply to the acquisition of supplies, material, equipment, or general support services;
8. Changes in the approved cost-sharing or matching provided by the non-federal entity; and
9. The need for additional federal funds to complete the project.

B. Confidential Aspects of Applications and Awards

When an application results in an award, it becomes a part of NIFA transaction records, which are available to the public. Information that the Secretary of Agriculture determines to be confidential, privileged, or proprietary in nature will be held in confidence to the extent permitted by law. Therefore, applicants should clearly mark any information within the application they wish to have considered as confidential, privileged, or proprietary. NIFA will retain a copy of an application that does not result in an award for three years. Such an application will be released only with the consent of the applicant or to the extent required by law. An applicant may withdraw at any time prior to the final action thereon.

C. Regulatory Information

This program is not subject to the provisions of Executive Order 12372, which requires intergovernmental consultation with state and local officials. Under the provisions of the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (44 U.S.C. Chapter 35), the collection of information requirements contained in this notice have been approved under OMB Document No. 0524-0039.

APPENDIX I: AGENCY CONTACT

Programmatic Contact

Name	Email	Telephone
Dr. Jodi Williams	Jodi.Williams@usda.gov	202-692-0132

Administrative Contacts

Name	Email
Awards Management Division (AMD)	SM.AMDAdministrativeContacts@usda.gov

NIFA's Mailing Address:
National Institute for Food and Agriculture
U.S. Department of Agriculture
2312 East Bannister Road
Mail Stop 10000 (ten thousand)
Kansas City, MO 64131

APPENDIX II: GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Name	Acronyms
Authorized Representative	AR
Agricultural Research, Extension, and Education reform Act of 1998	AREERA
Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance	CFDA
Data Management Plan	DMP
National Institute of Food and Agriculture	NIFA
Request for Application	RFA
Research, Education, and Economics	REE
United States Department of Agriculture	USDA

APPENDIX III: DEFINITIONS

Refer to 7 CFR 3430 Competitive and Noncompetitive Non-formula Federal Assistance Programs – General Award Administrative Provisions for additional definitions.

Terms	Definitions
Continuation Award	An award instrument by which NIFA agrees to support a specified level of effort for a predetermined period of time with a statement of intention to provide additional support at a future date, provided that performance has been satisfactory, appropriations are available for this purpose, and continued support would be in the best interest of the federal government and the public.
Matching	The process through which a grant recipient match awarded USDA funds with cash and in-kind contributions on a dollar-for-dollar basis. The matching funds must derive from non-Federal sources.
New Application	An application not previously submitted to a program.
Renewal Application	A project application that seeks additional funding for a project beyond the period that was approved in an original or amended award.
Resubmitted Application	A project application that was previously submitted to a program, but the application was not funded.
Resubmitted Renewal Application	A project application that requests additional funding for a project beyond the period that was approved in the original award. This is an application that had previously been submitted for renewal to but not funded.